

Washington, DC - Today, President Barack Obama nominated Edward Avalos to serve as the United States Department of Agriculture Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs.

"I think Edward is a perfect fit for this position. The work experience, knowledge of the issues and commitment to the agricultural community he brings to the USDA will make him an effective advocate for our country's agricultural products," said Congressman Harry Teague. "I am proud to have worked with the Obama Administration to identify a qualified candidate to fill this important role. I think both our country and the state of New Mexico will be well served by having Edward at the USDA."

The Under Secretary for Marketing and Regulatory Programs facilitates domestic and international marketing of U.S. agricultural products and ensures the health and care of animals and plants. MRP agencies are active participants in setting national and international standards.

Edward M. Avalos' biography:

Edward M. Avalos has 34 years experience in agriculture marketing. His career includes a 5 year tour with the Texas Department of Agriculture and 29 years at the New Mexico Department of Agriculture (NMDA).

Having been raised on a family farm in the Mesilla Valley of Southern New Mexico, Mr. Avalos has spent a lifetime in agriculture. Primary crops grown on his family's farm included specialty crops, such as chile peppers, pecans, onions, and alfalfa as well as commodity crops such as cotton and wheat.

While serving in New Mexico, Mr. Avalos established the New Mexico Specialty Crops Program, which provides matching funds to companies, individuals, agricultural organizations, commodity groups, and non-profits, which have the commitment of improving the economic viability of rural economies or have marketing/promotional projects of specialty crop and value-added products. In an effort to increase and maintain market share for specialty crops, he has implemented numerous trade missions and promotions including the on-going 12 state green chile pepper

promotion which yearly generates over \$26 million in retail sales. To create an alternative source of income for farming and ranching operations, agri-tourism was introduced and developed through funding and educational programs.

In the international arena, Mr. Avalos has worked in Mexico, Japan, China, Canada, and Latin America. In the mid 1980's, a successful and functional livestock trade mechanism was established for sheep, goats, dairy cattle, and beef cattle with Mexico. In the 1990's, pecans were exported to Japan and the Pacific Rim and most recently, the marketing team successfully established a pecan market in China.

Mr. Avalos is a member of the New Mexico Cattle Growers Association, New Mexico Wool Growers Association, New Mexico Chile Commission, New Mexico Dry Onion Commission, New Mexico Farm and Livestock Bureau, and the New Mexico Pecan Growers Association. He brings knowledge and capability in both domestic and international marketing. His experience can be relied upon to address and resolve the many concerns and difficult issues facing the food, agriculture, and livestock sectors in the United States. Mr. Avalos received his Bachelors and Masters degrees from New Mexico State University.

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